youthful feelings, nor wholly to obscure the jovialty of his spirit. When in the seventieth year of his age, he still continued to grasp after the shadow of a good which he had full possession of at twenty. He finally died. He was still commander of that same fortress ****, where the state's prisoners were usually confined. It is but natural to suppose that he would have exercised towards them a kindness and moderation whose worth he ought to have learned to value from a dearly-bought experience. It is strange to say, however, that he treated them harshly and peevishly, and that it was an ebullition of anger against one of them that finally brought him to his end in the eightieth year of his age.

PLEASING THE PARISH; OR, THE MINISTER'S WIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MISS BREMER'S VISIT TO COOPER'S LANDING," "GETTING INTO SOCIETY," "SIGNS OF GENTILITY," "BOARDING-HOUSE POLITICS," ETC. ETC.

The congregation of St. John's Church had been for some months without a rector. Many had applied, it is true, for the vacant situation; for it was one of the most wealthy and influential in the diocese, and the salary was three thousand a year. Add to this Christmas presents, and marriage fees there was a vast proportion of young people, and a Washington or Saratoga campaign always resulted in three or four engagements at the very least), and you had as comfortable a position as a clergyman, who had renounced "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," could desire.

The church itself was an expensive building, in the very extremity of the florid Gothic. The long windows were filled with stained glass of many colors, giving every shade and tone to the faces of the congregation in the different hours of the day. Thus the sharp features of Mrs. Skimpton—wife of one of the most influential vestrymen, who had a pew in the very front ranks of the middle aisle, that her devotion might be known of all men—were tinged with ruby red in the morning, saffron color during sermon time, and presented a livid blue aspect in the afternoon service. The organ was new and powerful, the choir the best that could be trained, the pulpit almost dazzled your eyes with gilding and crimson velvet, and the chandeliers flashed with an incessant glitter. Therefore the vestry of St. John's Church were as cautious as their position required, in selecting a new rector to take the place of the Rev. Dr. Naylor. It was a great pity, some were inclined to say, that he had been suffered to leave at all—he was so excellent a rhetorician, so graceful an orator, such a charming guest at a dinner-party, always quoting Timothy's example as he took his sherry wine, and was very complimentary to the hostess over Burgundy. But St. John's Church prided itself on resisting the innovations of Oxford, and Dr. Naylor was long suspected of inclining thereunto. Finally, to the horror of half the congregation, he appeared in the pulpit with his surplice, an indication not to be trifled with. Miss Little declared that "it gave her a perfect chill," and "she couldn't tell, for her part, where it would end." Mrs. Tuttle remarked, at a meeting of the Dorcas Society, of which she was president, and Mrs. Skimpton secretary, that "it was no more than she had been expecting for some time." And finally, the vestry were goaded into politely requesting "their late beloved rector" to resign.

But now the pulpit was no longer vacant. The bishop was not to be invited for the future to marry the wealthy members of the congregation, or the city missionary to bury its dead pensioners. The choir were once more in full practice of Rossini, the organist of Mendelssohn; and a new soprano had been engaged at four hundred a year—a sum greater, be it remarked, than many a faithful and zealous country clergyman receives in his laborious vocation.

The new rector was drawing crowded congregations. It was music to hear him read the church service, one declared. Another had never listened to more eloquent speaking than his sermons. Visitors from St. Peter's, St. James's, and Epiphany crowded the aisles in the afternoon, and a great inquiry had been made for vacant pews by families recently removed to the city. Every family in the congregation were ready to welcome Dr. Stone under their roof until his household should arrive, and twenty-seven urgent invitations to dinner were declined in one day. The great wonder was, how he should have cultivated such grace and elegance of manner in the country; for this was his first advent in city life. He had been a professor in a theological seminary for several years past; but his literary tastes and triumphs had drawn him from this comparative obscurity. Henceforth he was not to blush unseen.

To tell the truth, he had very little idea of the *furor* he was creating. He was much more interested in the arrival of his young wife to her new home than in any proffered attention to himself. He thought more of the souls than the establishments of his congregation, strange as it may seem, and cared for the effect of the truth upon them, rather than the eloquent periods which unfolded it, the natural language of his pen. He had felt some scruples in declining one great charge to accept of another equally important, but had decided upon city life, influenced not a little by the predilections

of his wife; though he would have been shocked had any one proved to him that he had listened to such an earthly consideration.

All his friends wondered when the quiet, unobtrusive Dr. Stone had married the daughter of one of the most influential men in the country, scarcely two years before. But Mary Elliot was intellectual as well as beautiful, and found no other congenial society in her native village. So, in the process of time, the reverend doctor's eyes were opened to the fact that

"Their friendship turned out
To be love in disguise;"

and they were married. Thus Mary Elliot, the petted, flattered, only daughter, became the wife of a grave theological professor, and was now to enter on a new sphere of city life.

The house in —— Place was selected by Mrs. Tuttle. Every one knows that it is at once an aristocratic and a quiet neighborhood. "Just the thing for a clergyman," said Mrs. Tuttle. "So central, in the midst of such fashionable society, and only eight hundred a year." Dr. Stone looked on vaguely, and seemed to consider what Mary, himself, and Etta, the baby, were to do with all those large rooms, and why the "fashionable society" was deemed important to a clergyman. However, he candidly confessed to Mrs. Tuttle, at whose house he then was, that he knew nothing about such matters, and left housekeeping entirely to Mary. Mrs. Skimpton lived directly opposite. That was pleasant, for Mary had never been away from her mother before, and Mrs. S. had paid him a great deal of motherly attention. As for upholstery, Mary must settle that, too, with Mrs. Tuttle's advice, and so he locked the new house, put the key in his pocket, and felt a great deal more settled than he had done in the morning.

Miss Little was ushered into the drawing-room of No. — —— Street, at a very early hour. So early, that a glimpse of the breakfast-table, still standing, had been caught in passing through the first floor. It was a dismal, stormy November day, and Miss Little was attired accordingly. She was one of the sisterhood so peculiar to large congregations, who seem at once the keepers of the rector's conscience, and the principal patrons of the parish school. They are always *au fait* to the scarlet fever from which the children suffer; can tell you where the rector's wife intends to pass the summer; and have the bishop's appointments at their fingers' ends. They are usually in mourning for a distant relative, and take decided views on all points of church controversy. Miss Little, in distinction to her name, was tall, and somewhat masculine. She carried a bag with a steel clasp, which shut with a very decided snap, and had served in its day to emphasize many of its owner's remarks. Whatever dissent Miss Little tolerated, there must be none from the views which she advanced.

On this particular morning, she was evidently disturbed at being kept in waiting. At first, she seated herself in the centre of the apartment, and cast her eyes up to the cornice, as if in profound meditation. But five, ten minutes passed, and, no one appearing, she commenced an active reconnoitre of the apartment, turning over every book on the centre-table, inspecting jealously the folds of the curtains, tracing the pattern of the wall paper, and feeling the embossed cover of the piano forte, as if inwardly deciding upon its price. This survey ended, she relapsed into a quick meditative walk, bounded by the mirrors at either end of the room, treading on every alternate crimson flower of the carpet, and carefully avoiding the blue leaves, as if some hidden danger lurked beneath.

At length the door opened, and Miss Angelica Tuttle appeared in her mamma's stead. "Mamma begged to be excused for a few moments; the children were such a bore. *All* children were," said Miss Angelica, with a languid shrug of her fair shoulders. Miss Little's assent was given with a corresponding pantomimic movement.

"I wanted to see *you*, too, though, my dear. You know how much we depend on *you* when there is any charitable movement. I suppose you have heard we have concluded on a fair for the Dorcas Society, to be held the week before Christmas. What post shall I put you down to? There 's the cake table now—Goodfellow has promised to furnish it at cost. It would be quite suggestive, you know; cake and rings, and all that sort of thing. Of course, we shall have ring cakes; it is always a good speculation."

"The cake table!" said Miss Angelica, musingly.

"Or the post-office. You can write charmingly, I know. Now you needn't blush, and deny those letters from Cape May last season in the Drawing-Room Journal were yours. Think what a sensation you could make through that paper window; and you may choose your own clerks."

The post-office appointment seemed likely to be accepted; but, at the same time, the word "sensation" seemed to call out a burst of latent enthusiasm, which quite dispelled the languid manner Miss Angelica, the eldest of eight children, thought proper to affect.

"Oh, Miss Little, *did* you see our new rector's wife last Sunday? Isn't she sweet? She stayed two days with us, while the upholsterer was getting the house ready. I would have sent you word; but she particularly requested no one should call, she was so fatigued."

"Lovely!" responded Miss Little. "*I* came on in the boat with her, and had the pleasure of being the *first* member of the congregation introduced. She will be a great acquisition to our Dorcas Society."

"And the Female Auxiliary," chimed in Mrs. Tuttle, who had just emerged from the nursery, as might be gathered from the stains on her not very orderly morning-dress. It was finely printed with

a kind of *palm* pattern (the fingers being, in some instances, included), in molasses and gravy toast. "I shall depend upon her taking an active part in the Female Auxiliary Society, for the evangelization of Southern Italy."

"Her bonnet was very becoming," added Miss Angelica. "It was one of Lawson's, too. She bought it on her way through New York. I was glad of it; for I do like a variety of bonnets in church. Now, last winter there were eleven in the middle aisle from Miss Wharton's—I can always tell a bonnet—five from Miss M'Connels, and four from Mrs. Burke's. One gets so tired of the same style."

"She seems a devoted mother," Mrs. Tuttle found space to throw in. "And her little girl was quite a model to my young people."

"Such curls!" said Miss Angelica.

"Such eyes and color!" said Miss Little.

"A lovely Maria Louise blue—the bonnet, not the curls."

"And plays, I 'm told," said Miss Little. "She will give such a tone to society! Quite another thing from poor Mrs. Naylor, who scarcely dared to venture an opinion in her husband's presence. His 'my dear!' was the most chilling thing I ever listened to."

"And her rude, unmannerly boys," added Mrs. Tuttle. "As bad as my own, every bit of it. Nobody knows what a trial she must have had."

"I should think *you* could judge," dutifully suggested her eldest born.

But the aside was lost, as both the elder ladies rushed forward to welcome Mrs. Skimpton, who was announced just at that moment. The new arrival was informed that "she was just the person wanted;" "her visit would save a call in —— Place;" "now she could decide at once who should be invited from St. Paul's." "Mrs. Tuttle was always glad to welcome her, but particularly so just then."

Mrs. Skimpton was to take charge of the refreshment table. For fairs immemorial this had been Mrs. Skimpton's post. Her "eternal vigilance" had saved many an extravagant waste, in the shape of heaped-up plates and cream at discretion. She could make change to half a cent; always furnished the hams from Mr. Skimpton's own grocer, at cost price; therefore no one ever thought of questioning her undoubted right to so important an appointment.

And then Mrs. Stone was reverted to; and Mrs. Skimpton, whose chamber overlooked Dr. Stone's study windows, gave testimony that they were the most devoted people she had ever known; and *she*, in particular, had such a pleasing way of asking advice. It was she—Mrs. Skimpton—who had suggested a damask Venetian pattern for the stair carpet, and blinds instead of curtains. "Curtains were always in the way somehow."

"Of neighbors, certainly," added Miss Angelica, innocently.

"So much depends on a rector's wife!" said Mrs. Skimpton.

"Yes, indeed," responded Miss Little.

"She ought to be—well—in some degree, amiable, I may say," added Mrs. Tuttle.

"And willing to be advised," remarked Mrs Skimpton.

"Not too old, or too dowdy," said Miss Angelica, with a glance at ner own stylish dressing-gown in the opposite mirror.

"Now Mrs. Stone is all this," continued Mrs. Skimpton; "and I, for one, have taken her by the hand. I shall suggest that she puts an oil cloth, instead of a carpet, upon the dining-room floor."

"I wonder if she has a soprano, and who was her teacher. She will appreciate the choir so entirely. Poor Mrs. Naylor never did. To think of her saying she preferred 'Old Hundred' to the 'Hymn from Zampa!'" Miss Angelica was musical.

Fortunate Mrs. Stone! As this was the reception among strangers she had so much dreaded Every tongue was loud in her praise. Visitors poured in from every circle in the congregation The second Saturday evening, she was obliged to empty the two card-baskets for the third time. The calls already amounted to two hundred! Many a motherly lady had resolved, with Mrs. Skimpton, to "take her by the hand." Miss Angelica was not the only young person who intended to patronize her. She had already been solicited to join eleven charitable associations, and had been elected a manager of the "Union Benevolent."

It is a fact, which many congregations never take into account, that a minister's wife, in common with the humblest parishioner, may have individual preferences, founded on her taste and cultivation, or the associations to which she has been accustomed. Moreover, she finds no more time in the twenty-four hours, neither is she in any degree exempt from the infirmities of our nature, in the shape of colds, toothache, or neuralgia. A call from a fash ionable congregation does not provide an infallible housekeeper, warranted to procure and manage good servants; and tradespeople do not become a miracle of promptness in a parsonage, sooner than when surrounded by the atmosphere of an ordinary dwelling.

Mrs. Stone's first offence was sending word that she was "engaged," to some eleven o'clock visit ors. Mrs. Skimpton waylaid them at a preliminary meeting of the Dorcas fair, and informed them Mrs. Stone was all the while only standing in the doctor's study, talking as unconcernedly as possible. Mrs. Clarke, who happened to be among the minor families, and, of course, very tenacious of her position in church society, considered it a direct and positive insult. Miss Allen, who had accompanied her, curled her lips with the remark that, "if they had only been carriage people, they 'd have seen where the engagement was!" Both ladies immediately became bitter and open opponents of the

numerous party ever sounding the praises of the rector's wife, and the story, with alterations and additions, was told at every subsequent gathering, thus bearing that leaven of uncharitableness against which the beloved apostle so eloquently warns his "little children." There is, unfortunately, a culmination to all popularity, and the decade soon commences. The magnificent Victoria Regia is the noblest of all blossoms, but a day finishes its short-lived glory, though hundreds flock to see and to admire.

Mrs. Stone wondered, in gentle humility, when the sound of her husband's praises and her own was echoed in her ear by her new acquaintances and friends; and her husband wrote a most eloquent and fervent discourse upon Christian fellowship. It was the outpouring of a full and grateful heart; no one could doubt it, as they looked into his beaming face. The choir sang the well-known chant, "Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." It was quite a little jubilee, and the pure voice of the rector's wife was heard joining, with deep feeling, in the joyful chorus.

Surely, if peace and love are the highest points of the Delectable Mountains, nearest unto the Heaven towards which they ever rise, it is a strange thing that we do not oftener seek to stand in the calm, clear atmosphere that bathes their summits!

Fairs, for church objects, are very good things, no doubt. They awaken an incredible amount of latent industry in the young ladies of the congregation. They give an increase of trade to the trimming stores where materials are purchased, and afford a great many people an opportunity to be charitable, and, at the same time, to obtain undersleeves, cuffs, night-caps, children's socks, and aprons, the products of the aforesaid industry, at a very low consideration, much cheaper than they could be furnished at the small shops kept by industrious widows, who depend upon the sale of these very articles for the maintenance and education of their children. Then, if their reduced custom obliges the petty shopkeeper to seek open charity, the Dorcas Society is sure to send, after much solicitation, the half ton of coal, and the scanty garments made and provided for such contingencies. Of course, they have no reason to complain. They are not supposed to be sensitive on the subject of receiving alms, or to make any internal reflections upon the wisdom, not to say justice, of the course pursued. The poor, God help them! are far too busy to allow time for moralizing.

It was unpardonable in Mrs. Stone to reason for them. Mrs. Skimpton listened to her with ill-disguised horror. She had called, expecting a zealous co-operation. She read the by-laws of the fair that was to be, the annual report of the society, including the disposal of soup tickets, and, though it was understood as a mere matter of form, of course, came for the sanction of the rector and the approval of his lady. Mrs. Naylor, despite her shortcomings, had always been active on these occasions. Mrs. Stone, with her leisure and her winning address, could, no doubt, do wonders. Of course, she was not expected to sew, explained Mrs. Skimpton; only to be present at the various meetings, and make herself and the movement generally popular. "For *there were* some ladies in the church so obstinate and so narrow-minded as to object to fairs!" Therefore they especially counted on her countenance.

Mrs. Stone had seen but little of city life, she said, but was already made sorrowful by the amount of want and misfortune she could not relieve. There was something to her very sad in the sight of those little shops, in which fancy articles were sold. They seemed to tell of a last effort to keep a little family undivided. It made her very heart ache to pass them at night. The solitary lamp in the window shedding such a feeble light over the dingy muslins and cheap ornaments displayed there, and then the tired-looking woman behind the counter, stitching away as rapidly as her fingers could fly, and looking up with such an eager, *craving* look, if the jingle of the little bell announced a customer. She had heard of the Dorcas Society, and somehow, though she could not pretend to judge for others, it seemed as if its members would make a happier arrangement if they contributed money instead of time, and employed poor women to make the garments they distributed to those who *could not*, for ill health or care, assist themselves at all.

"But," urged Mrs. Skimpton, blandly, "there are many young ladies now—your young friend, Miss Tuttle, for instance—who have no purse of their own, and can still give time."

"Do they not choose their own wardrobes?" asked Mrs. Stone, quietly. "And one expensive dress or ornament less might furnish the means."

Mrs. Skimpton's thin features grew sharper still by extension. What heresies! and from such a source! She could scarcely refrain from an instant explosion; but she still hoped, by Miss Little's assistance, to overcome Mrs. Stone's scruples. Unfortunately, as she was obliged to confess it, many would be influenced by the expression of opinions more than one already held.

But Miss Little's visit proved equally unsuccessful—Mrs. Stone remaining firm, though gentle, in her resolution to avoid taking an active part in the proposed charity. The very next day, the steel clasp was shut with an undeniable negative snap when some young ladies looked up from the mysteries of embroidering bronze toilet slippers, to propose doing a pair for Mrs. Stone, and making a new set of bands for the doctor.

"They might as well work for Queen Victoria at once, for all the thanks they would get," she said. "Mrs. Stone preferred to *pay* for all she wore; and it was well her husband had a large salary, the way she managed affairs!"

It was an undoubted dash of vinegar upon the fire of enthusiasm Mrs. Stone had kindled. Meek little

Miss Brown, who had made the proposal, and who, withal, was the youngest of the Sunday School teachers at St. John's, bent over her sewing with flushed cheeks and a mist before her eyes, which interfered not a little with the accuracy of her stitches. Miss Angelica Tuttle was also observed to have changed her phrases of adulation to a minor key, to say the least. Mrs. Clarke plainly declared that she never *did* like her from the first; and "poor, dear Mrs. Naylor's" forgotten virtues were paraded once more in open day, as the "sainted Maria" of some recently-married widower is held up for the correction and edification of her unfortunate successor.

Two hundred visits are not to be returned in two months, unless the whole of one's time is devoted to that specific object. It may answer for a young bride, who has a Honiton veil, an India shawl, and a new equipage to display; but for the wife of a clergyman, with a recently organized household, fond of her nursery, and obliged to entertain visitors at all hours, and on the slightest notice, it is a task in which even the most social would fail. Mrs. Stone, with a natural shrinking from new faces, and a round of pleasant household occupations, did her best; but still the formidable list diminished slowly, and, when the fair actually opened, there were many of her visitors that she knew only by name. As her declining to act in the matter had not extended to opposition, she concluded, by Dr. Stone's suggestion, to visit the hall in which it was in progress, thinking it would be an excellent opportunity to apologize to some, and renew her acquaintance with others. She had not been blind to the apparent coldness of many ladies of the congregation, for some weeks past, and her letters home, which before were filled with grateful expressions for the undeserved love and kindness she had received, avoided instinctively the mention of her social experience. It is a very humiliating confession to make, that of declining popularity; one we do not care to whisper even to ourselves; and Mrs. Stone silenced any such suggestions by condemning herself as over-sensitive and exacting.

No taste or expense had been spared to make the grand saloon attractive. It was richly draped, and filled with stalls containing every variety of articles that are ever congregated on such an occasion. The toy tables, the cake, the trinkets made it a children's paradise, and their eager little faces were clouded with their first lesson, perhaps, in the value of money, finding themselves unable to purchase everything with "three fips and a levy." Greedy little speculators they were, debating between the attractions of mintstick and the more lasting pleasure of "food for the mind," as presented in the veritable history of "Simple Simon," with colored plates. There were young ladies, accustomed to consider "shop girls" as of another order of beings from themselves, bargaining and wheedling the sale of a giant doll, or a cambric and lace toilet table. Mrs Jenkins, who treated her servants with less consideration than her carriage horses, was most obsequious in her attentions to the merest "fip customer," as she dished up the ice cream, or made change with an insinuating smile. It was a beautiful lesson of democracy—Walnut Street, as it were, walking hand in hand with Kensington, and Washington Square growing affable to Second and South.

Miss Angelica Tuttle was the first to recognize the presence of Mrs. Stone, who had entered quietly, unattended by her husband, who was to join her at nightfall. She had quitted her exclusive domain, the post-office, the mails having been detained, that is, at present being "made up" by her assistants, and was making a tour of the room to see who was likely to call for letters in the course of the evening. A journey of leisure with business purposes.

"You have a very beautiful room," said Mrs. Stone, admiringly. "I hope you make out well."

Miss Angelica vouchsafed a half stare, and answered, very pointedly, "they had used both *time and money*, and hoped Mrs. Stone did not consider it an unpardonable waste of either."

This was but the first shot of a constant harassing fire, to which the rector's wife was subjected in her progress through the room. Miss Little, at the book table, pretended not to see her, and devoured the index of the last church magazine with praiseworthy industry. Mrs. Clarke wondered how she could find time to visit fairs, as she had none for seeing visitors.

"Or returning calls," added Mrs. Jenkins, whose name stood conspicuously near the head of the unfortunate list.

It was quite a relief, at this moment, when quiet Miss Brown came with a glass of jelly, and a request that she would come behind her table and eat it. Miss Brown established her visitor very pleasantly in a recess, and returned to the vending of needle-books. The uncomfortable *brusqueness* of Mesdames Clarke and Jenkins was, in a measure, forgotten, as Mrs. Stone watched the scene before her; nor did she, at first, notice a lady who came from a neighboring table and took possession of the other vacant seat a few moments after. Fairs are great innovators upon formality, and the unknown lady bowed and smiled when she saw she had a neighbor.

"Quite an animated scene," was the commonplace with which the conversation began.

"Very," returned Mrs. Stone, pleasantly.

"I don't belong to St. John's parish," continued the sociable little woman; "but I always go where I think I can do good. To tell the truth, though, I 'm more than half inclined to leave. I never heard so many uncharitable things said in my life, as they manage to talk over about their rector and his wife."

Mrs. Stone gave a slight start of astonishment.

"I don't think it looks well—do you? Just now, Miss Angelica Tuttle came to my table and said Mrs. Stone was in the room. I should like to get a

glance at her. Miss Angelica says, 'any one that dresses as she does, to talk about *her* extravagance!' And Mrs. Clarke says she 's a perfect aristocrat, and visits only the carriage people in the church. Then that Mrs. Skimpton, with her whining way—'Oh, my dear, you should set *her* a lesson of charity! I 'm sure she needs it, condemning those older and wiser than herself, as she does, wholesale!' "

The lively speaker managed to imitate Mrs. Skimpton's solemn tones most admirably, and Mrs. Stone, kept silent by surprise, and, it must be confessed, a momentary feeling of anger at the injustice thus displayed, rose to leave the sofa.

"Well, I declare, I 'm as careless as ever," said the lady. "You may be Mrs. Skimpton's most intimate friend, for all I know. But I can't help it. I came away because I was boiling over with indignation; for, though I never saw poor Mrs. Stone, and never expect to, I can t bear backbiting, and I told them so. How would she feel towards them, and they working for *charity!* To tell the truth, that 's my only objection to fairs. In the morning, before people come, and at meal-times, they have nothing else to do but get together and talk over their neighbors. You ought to have heard the way they went on about the Stones when they first came. Nobody was half so good, or charming, or elegant. As for Dr. Stone, they sainted him at once, and were for getting his life insured, for fear he 'd be translated!"

"Excuse me," began her listener, still moving towards the outer saloon.

"Oh no. I see you 're offended. Excuse *me*, I ought to say; but really I can't help it. My heart always runs away with my tongue; and to hear that doll of an Angelica Tuttle go on so!"

It was an unexpected relief to find Dr. Stone looking for her as she passed the screen. She longed to get home and think it all over, and comfort herself with the recollection that she had never intended an offence. But, in ignorance of what she had suffered, he wished to make a tour of the room, and she was obliged to accompany him. Then he had an engagement to meet the vestry, and it was no time to broach so uncomfortable a subject; and so she took little Etta upon her knee, and passed a cheerless, miserable evening, that had left its traces upon her face when her husband returned.

It was a new ground to him. He had lived apart from detraction so long, that he did not know how to meet it. "I don't think they can intend to be unkind," he said. But he prayed more earnestly that night for a forgiving and patient spirit.

The clouds still cast a heavy shadow when the morning came, and, jaded by the impertinent neglect of a servant she would not discharge, because she knew her to be homeless and friendless, Mrs. Stone shrunk, with almost a nervous dread, when a visitor was announced, and a card, with a name she did not recognize, was placed in her hands. She could not decline the visit; and she was glad she had not done so, when she saw the gentle face of her visitor, an elderly lady, with all the grace, if not the animation, of youth.

She enfolded the hand Mrs. Stone extended in both her own, and drew her to the sofa beside her.

"You must not look on me as a stranger," she said, "for I am one of your husband's parishioners; though we pass very little time in the city. The quiet of our country house suits me best, at my age; and last Sunday was the first time I have had the pleasure of listening to Dr. Stone. I came to see *you* this morning, my dear," continued Mrs. Lovel, the name upon the card Mrs. Stone was still nervously bending. "I happened to overhear a conversation last evening that I knew would fret you; and I should have introduced myself then, only I thought it better to see you alone. You must excuse Mrs. Dale. She had not the least idea whom she was speaking to."

Mrs. Stone's face flushed with the recollection.

"Don't think *me* meddlesome. But I 'm somewhat older than you, recollect, and I have daughters of my own among strangers; and, in fact, I felt so sorry for you, I could have taken you to my heart there."

In spite of her attempt at composure, the rector's wife felt her lips tremble, as she listened to these kind words.

"You are very good, Mrs. Lovel, I 'm sure," she said.

"I 've seen the rise and fall of a great deal of church popularity in my day, my child. I know about what you have gone through with as well as you can tell me. So I 've come to offer my friendship and advice—not about carpets or furniture, though," she added, smiling. "So, to begin as a mentor, let me tell you there 's only one safe course. Act yourself, and don't defer to any one's opinion in matters that only concern yourself. If you begin to arrange your house by Mrs. Skimpton's card, Mrs. Jenkins may take exceptions, and if you patronize Miss Tuttle's dress-maker, Miss Allen will consider you a fright. If you give to Mrs. Tuttle's benevolent societies and not to Miss Little's, one of the ladies will be certain to consider you mean; and it will be an unpardonable offence, should you choose to pass an evening with a friend *out* of the parish, if you have declined an invitation within its limits. You must not care about these matters. Be courteous to every one, but let them understand you consider that you have still a right to your own opinion. If your aunt presents you with a hat from Lawson's, and you choose to wear it, do so, even if comments are made. You see I 've inquired out your capital offences."

"Oh, how contemptible in them!" exclaimed Mrs. Stone.

"That 's very much like anger, I 'm afraid," said Mrs. Lovel; "though I grant you have cause to be provoked. Now I don't counsel insubordination, remember, or actual rebellion. I only assert that the rector's wife is not church property, and

people have no more right to manage her family than she has to interfere with theirs. You have the ordeal to go through; but, if you 're not obstinate and haughty on the one side, or weakly and timorous on the other, it won't do you any harm. By and by, you will begin to make valuable friends, and then you will have a real home among us; and be happy, I hope."

"You are very kind, Mrs. Lovel," was all Mrs. Stone could say. Her visitor's manner was so like that of her own mother. She could have begged her to stay when she rose to take leave.

"You will always have a true friend in me, my child; and you must come and pass a quiet Christmas week with Mr. Lovel and myself, at Elmwood —that is, if you like old people—and we will talk these matters over more leisurely. Meantime, I 'd keep my blinds down when Mrs. Skimpton's are up, and not exert myself too much to entertain Miss Tuttle. She catalogued your wardrobe the day you were so good as to show her your bridal dress. I know she begged to see it. Good by, good by; don't come into the air with that cold." And good Mrs. Lovel was gone, leaving a conviction of her sincerity in kind-heartedness with the sorely-tried wife of the rector.

PERSONS AND PICTURES FROM THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

ELIZABETH TUDOR AND MARY STUART.

BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT, AUTHOR OF "THE ROMAN TRAITOR," "MARMADUKE WYVIL," "CROMWELL," "THE BROTHERS," &C. &C.

THE greatest and most fortunate of queens—the loveliest and most hapless of women. They might have been friends and sisters, as they were sister queens of one fair island, then, for the last time, divided; fortune and fate, and that worst curse of sovereigns as of nations, religious dissension, rendered them enemies; and, as in such case ever must be, the weaker of the two was shipwrecked in the strife. They were, moreover, nearly akin; and this, which should have been a source of amity and good will, was, on the contrary, the cause of rivalry, hostility, suspicion, and finally of the death of one, and of a dark blot on the escutcheon of the other.

Elizabeth, the second daughter of the most arbitrary and absolute king who ever sat upon the throne of England, Henry VIII., and of his favorite wife, who was the people's favorite also, ascended the throne of England—after the successive deaths of her brother Edward VI., a weak minor, and her elder sister Mary, a hard-hearted bigot, whose memory is to this day a reproach to England and accursed of her people—amidst the general acclamations and sincere delight of all classes. Her accession had been long looked forward to as the oil that was to assuage the troubled sea of contending factions, the sweet balm that was to heal the wounds of persecution. She found a people nearly, if not absolutely, united; for the barbarities of Mary, while they had but increased the zeal, and added the prestige of martyrdom to the cause, of the Protestants, had alienated the moderate Catholics; and, indeed, disgusted all classes of Englishmen, with whom religious toleration, and even indifference, has been a more usual phase of the public sentiment than anything leaning towards cruelty or coercion Thus, both religious parties greeted her advent to the throne, and that sincerely; for the Catholics apprehended, as a body, no severe retaliation from the hands of a princess known to be moderate and politic, rather than splenetic and rash; and the Protestants were too happy at obtaining quiet, peace, and toleration, to desire in their turn to become persecutors. Compassion, moreover, was a further sentiment in her favor; for she had conducted herself with rare prudence during her sister's reign; and the imminent and instant peril in which she lived until Mary's death had rendered her an object of general sympathy, even among the Catholic party.

She came to the throne at the age of twenty-six years, the whole of which time she had passed in a subordinate, always humiliating, and often dangerous, position. No adulation of courtiers, no loud lip-loyalty of shouting thousands, had fostered her youthful mind's worst passions. Neglected, scorned as illegitimate, imperiled as heretic, she had lived with her studies, had communed with herself and the world of the mighty dead, more than with modern men or manners. Her tutor had been the famous Roger Ascham; and, although the education which he bestowed upon her was, of a surety, what we should now deem better suited for the male than for the female sex, it cannot be denied that it was such as befitted one who was to fill the place of a king in England, and to contend against the greatest powers and princes of Europe for her own crown and her country's liberties.

Already, when she climbed the steps of that proud throne, had she learned one mighty lesson, had proved herself capable of one grand triumph: *major adversis** she had shown herself already; the harder task lay yet behind, to exhibit herself, as so few have done of mortals, *par secundis.*†

* Superior to adversity. † Equal to prosperity.